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ABSTRACT

Two questions were posed in this study: (1) Is there a significant difference between teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behavior and actual teacher behavior? and (2) What combination of variables of sex, school level, race, age, experience, and preparation level is the best predictor of teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behavior and actual teacher behavior? Responses to the Teacher Behavior Description Questionnaire were obtained from 448 middle and senior high school teachers. Findings indicated that there was a significant difference between teachers' perceptions of desirable behavior and actual behavior. Analysis of findings on question two revealed a consistent pattern of significant relationships of the combination of the variables of gender, race, and school level to teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behaviors. Female teachers, black teachers, and secondary teachers tended to attach more importance to desirable behaviors than did male teachers, white teachers, and middle school teachers. Female teachers, black teachers, and teachers with more years of experience perceived the behaviors for effective performance occurring more frequently in public schools than did male teachers, white teachers, and teachers with fewer years of experience. Data from the study are presented in tables and the questionnaire is attached. (JD)

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A COMPARISON BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DESIRABLE TEACHER BEHAVIOR AND ACTUAL TEACHER BEHAVIOR IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

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A Comparison Between Teachers' Perceptions of Desirable Teacher Behavior and Actual Teacher Behavior in the Public Schools

Gage (1976), in one of his major reviews of research on teaching effectiveness, reported findings that indicated that specific teacher behaviors can make a difference in student achievement in reading and mathematics. He concluded that an effective teacher should: (1) have a system of rules that allows pupils to attend to their personal and procedural needs without having to check with the teacher; (2) move around the room a lot, monitoring pupils' seatwork and communicating to pupils an awareness of their behavior, while also attending to their academic needs; (3) ensure that the assignments are interesting and worthwhile yet still easy enough to be completed without teacher direction; (4) keep to a minimum such activities as giving directions and organizing the class for instruction; (5) with less academically-oriented pupils, always aim at getting the child to give some kind of response to a question (by rephrasing, giving cues, or asking a new question); (6) during reading-group instruction, give a maximal amount of brief feedback and provide fast-paced activities of the "drill" type.

Research conducted by Good, Biddle, and Brophy (1979) lends support to the concept that teacher style and behavior influence learning outcomes. Teacher expectation makes a significant difference in student achievement, and teachers who expect their students to achieve organize the learning climate to maximize time spent on productive activities. It also appears from Brophy's findings that teacher leadership, classroom organization and good management skills do in fact have an influence on teacher effectiveness,

although recent research seems limited to academic areas.

As pointed out by Medley (1977), and others, more correlational studies of two types are needed. One should be studies relating the competencies a teacher possesses to the performance or the behavior of the teacher while interacting with the students. The second should involve studies of the relationship between the performance of a teacher and the respective effectiveness of the teacher--the actual contribution to the students' learning.

A basic assumption underlying the research of many investigators, including the authors, is that the best teachers know more about effective teaching than theory and/or research support conclusively at the present time. The writers based their rationale upon the following assumptions which were formulated from the findings of previous research. First, teaching involves behavior and can therefore be observed, analyzed, and changed. Even though it is highly complex and difficult to analyze in terms of outcomes at times, the behavior must be studied if it is to be improved.

Second, a study of teacher behavior should reveal certain specific subscales or categories which focus upon the total behavioral process, but are also categorically descriptive and can be studied in themselves. Teaching involves the interactions between students and teachers and includes not only actions, but personality traits and characteristics as well.

Another assumption of the researchers was that behaviors of teachers can be identified, diagnosed and recorded by practitioners on an analytical basis, and compared on a value basis by teachers on what should be

sound educational practice versus the degree to which sound practices are found in classroom settings. Criteria incorporated in the assessment questionnaire were assumed to be valid on the basis of prior research and/or expert opinion. No attempt was made to assess any impact or effect upon student learning.

While this study has its foundation in the cumulative experiences of the 448 teachers who participated, it is also directly related to earlier attempts to improve the evaluation and assessment of teacher-classroom behavior. The rational development of professional programs for inservice training requires that professional competencies be identified and ways of assessing and directing the degree of competence be developed.

Statement of the Problem

The problem in this study was to compare teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behavior and actual teacher behavior in the public schools.

Questions to be answered were:

1. Is there a significant difference between teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behavior and actual teacher behavior?
2. What combination of six personal variables of sex, school level, race, age, experience, and preparation level is the best predictor of teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behavior and actual teacher behavior?

Procedures

To answer the questions, the Teacher Behavior Description Questionnaire (TBDQ) was developed and factor analyzed. The researchers attempted to utilize the important contributions made by previous researchers and

constructed the TBDQ based upon previous findings and developed the study around documented theory and practice. Reliability coefficients of .98 were obtained for both the desirable behavior and actual behavior scales. Six subscales were identified with reliability coefficients ranging from .81 to .93. The six factors identified in the subscales were labeled as follows:

Factor 1: Responsible, Controlled
Factor 2: Stimulating, Imaginative
Factor 3: Challenging, Thought Provoking
Factor 4: Friendly, Understanding
Factor 5: Prepared, Organized
Factor 6: Integrated, Holistic

The sample consisted of 448 classroom teachers from two states. Included in the sample were teachers from middle schools and senior high schools. Small, medium and large schools from small districts and large districts were represented in the sample. The data were gathered in May of 1982.

Findings

Question one was addressed through the use of t tests which compared desirable behavior and actual behavior scores on each of the 33 items on the TBDQ. Results of the analysis are presented in Table 1. There was a significant difference beyond the .001 confidence level between teachers' perceptions of desirable behavior and actual behavior on all 33 TBDQ items.

Multiple regression analysis used in question two revealed a consistent pattern of significant relationships of the combinations of the variables of sex, race, and school level to teachers' perceptions of desirable teacher behaviors as measured by the total TBDQ score and by each

Table 1

Comparisons Between Desirable and Actual Teacher Behavior as Perceived by Classroom Teachers

Behaviors	Desirable		Actual		t Value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1	4.61	.76	3.83	.94	18.66*
2	4.29	.93	3.68	.88	13.55*
3	4.72	.73	3.88	.97	18.39*
4	4.52	.78	3.73	.96	17.21*
5	4.59	.76	3.83	.97	17.10*
6	4.53	.79	3.81	.98	16.53*
7	4.71	.72	4.19	.93	13.67*
8	4.54	.81	3.85	.94	16.60*
9	4.66	.74	4.00	.92	15.86*
10	4.64	.72	3.91	.89	17.66*
11	4.45	.82	3.80	.91	16.20*
12	4.37	.81	3.68	.90	17.07*
13	4.67	.75	4.15	.95	12.77*
14	4.71	.73	4.07	.97	15.29*
15	4.67	.69	4.00	.89	17.18*
16	4.65	.71	3.69	.86	22.72*
17	4.25	.92	3.50	.91	16.34*
18	4.48	.79	3.65	.90	18.31*
19	4.57	.74	3.75	.94	18.20*
20	4.47	.78	3.58	.93	19.21*
21	4.30	.87	3.43	1.01	18.39*
22	4.41	.80	3.66	1.04	16.42*
23	4.37	.82	3.54	.93	19.22*
24	4.73	.67	4.18	.89	14.71*
25	4.61	.73	3.81	.98	17.27*
26	4.37	.88	3.82	.88	12.89*
27	4.54	.79	3.95	.91	14.54*
28	4.45	.83	3.72	1.03	14.66*
29	4.63	.72	4.12	.89	14.70*
30	4.56	.78	3.89	.89	16.84*
31	4.49	.77	3.81	.90	16.72*
32	4.42	.82	3.48	.98	19.60*
33	4.42	.82	3.58	.97	18.17*
Total Score	149.56	20.31	125.76	23.24	23.94*

* $t \geq 1.98$ significant at .05 level

subscale score. Results of the analysis are presented in Tables 2-8. Female teachers, black teachers, and secondary teachers tended to attach more importance to the behaviors for effective performance than did male teachers, white teachers, and elementary and middle school teachers.

Combinations of the variables of race, sex, and experience consistently yielded significant relationships to perceptions of actual teacher behaviors as measured by the total score and by each subscale score of the TBDQ. Results of the analysis are presented in Tables 9-15. Female teachers, black teachers, and teachers with more years of experience perceived the behaviors for effective performance occurring more frequently in public schools than did male teachers, white teachers, and teachers with fewer years of experience.

Future Directions

Educators are in an era of accountability for performance and legislatures are again studying the possibilities of merit pay plans. The TBDQ could prove to be a very powerful instrument in assessing meritorious teacher performance.

Professional development activities for teachers are vital. The writers have already used the instrument as a basis for professional development activities with teachers and the participants rated the activities as extraordinarily useful in providing them with additional insights into behaviors which could enhance their teaching effectiveness.

Table 2

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 1 (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2744	.0753	.2744	30.253*
School Level	.2979	.0887	.0529	6.970*
Race	.3135	.0983	.1499	4.458*
Age	.3144	.0989	.1074	.678
Experience	.3160	.0990	.0249	.665
Preparation	.3173	.1007	.0591	.388

*$F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 3

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 2 (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2439	.0595	.2439	23.154*
School Level	.2781	.0773	.0769	9.154*
Race	.3011	.0907	.1580	6.242*
Preparation	.3029	.0917	.0665	.805
Experience	.3051	.9931	.0102	1.535
Age	.3089	.0954	.1054	1.134

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 4

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 3 (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2295	.0526	.2295	20.817*
School Level	.2642	.0698	.0773	8.762*
Race	.2868	.0822	.1511	6.076*
Experience	.2923	.0854	-.0204	3.029
Age	.2971	.0883	.0906	1.385
Preparation	.2980	.0888	.0401	.240

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 5

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 4 (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2385	.0568	.2385	19.149*
Race	.2541	.0646	.1428	4.071*
School Level	.2712	.0735	.0314	3.393
Preparation	.2788	.0777	.0949	2.629
Experience	.2825	.0798	.0064	2.894
Age	.2919	.0852	.1185	2.625

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 6

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 5 (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2717	.0738	.2717	26.901*
School Level	.2989	.0893	.0621	7.825*
Race	.3235	.1046	.1734	7.032*
Age	.3281	.1076	.1394	3.260
Experience	.3345	.1118	.0152	2.699
Preparation	.3378	.1141	.0762	1.128

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 7

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 6 (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2869	.0823	.2869	30.627*
School Level	.3045	.0927	.0368	5.186*
Race	.3213	.1032	.1588	4.775*
Age	.3247	.1054	.1320	2.327
Experience	.3291	.1083	.0204	1.921
Preparation	.3325	.1105	.0764	1.086

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 8

Relationship of Personal Variables to Total Score (Desirable) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2725	.0742	.2725	27.853*
School Level	.2974	.0884	.0565	7.218*
Race	.3193	.1019	.1669	6.274*
Preparation	.3218	.1035	.0763	1.174
Experience	.3241	.1051	.0125	2.228
Age	.3305	.1092	.1241	2.073

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 9

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 1 (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2358	.0556	.2358	13.016*
Race	.2969	.0882	.2321	13.405*
Experience	.3203	.1026	.1603	5.498*
School Level	.3224	.1039	-.1023	.599
Age	.3225	.1040	.1243	.044
Preparation	.3225	.1040	.0519	.017

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 10

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 2 (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Race	.2569	.0660	.2569	21.286*
Experience	.2918	.0851	.1665	8.355*
Sex	.3135	.0982	.1839	7.033*
Preparation	.3156	.0996	.0220	.680
Age	.3172	.1006	.1048	.504
School Level	.3173	.1007	-.0553	.037

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 11

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 3 (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Race	.2624	.0688	.2624	22.433*
Sex	.2894	.0837	.1817	6.286*
Experience	.3091	.0955	.1472	6.124*
Preparation	.3112	.0968	.0182	.613
Age	.3126	.0977	.0962	.387
School Level	.3127	.0978	-.0738	.052

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

Table 12

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 4 (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Race	.2067	.0427	.2067	10.964*
Sex	.2531	.0640	.1917	7.699*
Experience	.2737	.0749	.1385	4.269*
School Level	.2762	.0762	-.0918	.599
Age	.2764	.0764	.1026	.062

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 5 and 442)

Table 13

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 5 (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Race	.2495	.0622	.2495	16.354*
Sex	.3121	.0974	.2423	13.305*
Experience	.3215	.1034	.1199	2.736
School Level	.3280	.1076	-.1335	2.095
Preparation	.3280	.1076	.0524	.014

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 5 and 442)

Table 14

Relationship of Personal Variables to Factor 6 (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Sex	.2033	.0413	.2033	11.985*
Race	.2470	.0610	.1853	8.959*
Experience	.2558	.0654	.1002	1.255
School Level	.2611	.0681	-.0062	1.239
Age	.2612	.0682	.1063	.028

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 5 and 442)

Table 15

Relationship of Personal Variables to Total Score (Actual) of the TBDQ

Variables	Multiple R	R^2	Simple r	F
Race	.2523	.0636	.2523	18.224*
Sex	.3012	.0907	.2205	10.953*
Experience	.3234	.1045	.1585	5.878*
Preparation	.3243	.1051	.0348	.270
Age	.3246	.1053	.1202	.088
School Level	.3248	.1055	-.0809	.083

* $F \geq 3.86$ significant at .05 level (df = 6 and 441)

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TEACHER BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

The Teacher Behavior Description Questionnaire is designed to measure (1) teacher perceptions of the desirability of certain behaviors for effective teacher performance; and (2) teacher perceptions of the extent to which the behaviors are being practiced by fellow teachers. The following definitions apply to the two scales used in this instrument:

DESIRABLE BEHAVIOR: The extent to which a behavior should be practiced in classrooms

ACTUAL BEHAVIOR: The extent to which a behavior is practiced in classrooms

Each behavior item is to be rated on both scales, the Desirable Behavior scale and the Actual Behavior scale. Please draw a circle around the number which best describes your perception of the proper rating of the item on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 representing the lowest rating and 5 the highest rating.

When rating on the Desirable Behavior scale, a rating of 1 indicates that you perceive the particular behavior as unimportant for effective teacher performance; a rating of 5 indicates that you perceive the particular behavior as highly important for effective teacher behavior; and a rating of 2, 3, or 4 indicates your perception of the importance of the behavior as falling somewhere between the two extreme ratings.

When rating on the Actual Behavior scale, a rating of 1 indicates that you perceive the particular behavior as occurring in classrooms very rarely; a rating of 5 indicates that you perceive the particular behavior as occurring frequently or extensively in classrooms; and a rating of 2, 3, or 4 indicates your perception of the frequency of occurrence of the behavior as falling somewhere between the two extreme ratings.

PLEASE DO NOT OMIT ANY ITEMS!

TEACHER BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

	Desirable Behavior	Actual Behavior
1. Shows concern for individual pupil's personal emotional problems and needs	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2. Is tolerant of errors on part of pupils	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3. Finds good things in pupils to which to call attention	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4. Listens encouragingly to individual pupil's viewpoint	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5. Exhibits behavior that invites friendliness from all people	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6. Goes out of way to be pleasant and/or to help people	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
7. Smiles and speaks to individual pupils; knows names	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8. Has a detailed lesson plan; has materials that will be used	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
9. Tells class what to expect during period; has next assignment planned	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
10. Objectives of the lesson are clearly discernable; proceeds with assurance	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
11. Anticipates and prepares answers for student questions	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
12. Keeps discussion focused on objectives	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

TEACHER BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

	Desirable Behavior	Actual Behavior
13. Is aware of school regulations and is guided by them	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
14. Is punctual	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
15. Gives definite directions and checks on responses	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
16. Has interesting presentation; gets and holds attention	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
17. Is clever and witty; enthusiastic, animated	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
18. Assignments are challenging	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
19. Takes advantage of pupil interests	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
20. Seems to provoke thinking; provokes strong esthetic appeal	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
21. Uses original and relatively unique devices to aid instruction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
22. Tries new materials or methods	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
23. Is resourceful in answering questions; has many pertinent and novel illustrations available	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
24. Speaks confidently; is self-confident in relations with pupils	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

TEACHER BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

	Desirable Behavior	Actual Behavior
25. Takes mistakes and/or criticism in stride	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
26. Actions are reasonable, aggressive, and spontaneous	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
27. Is poised	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
28. Accepts new tasks readily	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
29. Presentations are concerned with basic principles of the field being taught	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
30. Organizes ideas, concepts, and principles on a recognizable priority system	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
31. Draws examples and explanations from various sources and related fields	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
32. Leads pupils to form and test hypotheses	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
33. Approach to subject is in spirit of discovery	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

PERSONAL DATA: Age _____ Sex _____

Race_____ Years of Experience_____

Level of Preparation (check one):

Baccalaureate _____; Masters_____;

Specialist _____; Doctorate _____

Teaching Level (check one):

Elementary School _____; Middle School_____;

Junior High School_____; High School _____